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A
LETTER
FROM A
Gentleman in SCOTLAND
TO HIS
Friend in *England*,
AGAINST THE
Sacramental Test;

A S

Inconsistent with the UNION, Dangerous
to the Ecclesiastical Constitution of *North-
Brittany*; and to such Parts of their Civil Con-
stitution as are reserv'd to them; Inconsistent
with the Civil Interest of *Great Brittain* in Ge-
neral; contrary to the Design of Our Savi-
our's Institution of the *Lord's-Supper*, and to
the Doctrine of the Church of *England*.

L O N D O N :

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A LETTER from a Gentleman in Scotland to his Friend in England, against the Sacramental Test, &c.

S. I R,

IT'S no wonder that many of the Scots, tho' otherwise well affected to the present *Government* and *Protestant Succession*, have yet appear'd with so much Resentment against the late *Union*; for tho' we are not yet fallen under the unhappy Consequences which we dread, it is plain that all the Terms of it have not been so inviolably preserv'd, as to carry us beyond all Fear of a Pernicious Design upon our *Ecclesiastical Constitution*; notwithstanding the Indefeasible Security (as is pretended by some) we have got by the *Articles of Union*. If it be good Logick to argue from lesser to greater Things, to wit, From Encroachments in Civil Matters to a Possibility of introducing what Alteration they think fit in Matters of higher Importance; I can't apprehend but it is visible enough, without much Penetration, that our Present Condition is precarious, and that when they please to Exert themselves, it is out of the Reach of our Power to make any Opposition.

To set this Matter in as clear a Light as possible, and without the Air of Prejudice, I shall pass over every thing that may seem like an Invidious Reflection on the Persons immediately Concern'd in it, or the Motives they were Govern'd by, or the Reasons that made it necessary; tho' was one inclin'd to give an Account of Circumstances relating to each of these, it would be Demonstration sufficient to convince us how little Confidence is to be put in Man, and it is probable an equal Temptation may expose us to the Ruin and Confusion we fear. The Springs are muddy enough without Aggravation; and if we trace the Line of Right Reason, the Effect can't be more Noble than the Cause, which, in all probability, appears black enough, without the Strokes and Colours of Art to Emblazon it; especially if we consider, that it receives its Direction from the Mercenary Intentions of some who aim at no higher Ends then their own, or at furthest the Interest of a Faction, which, by poor narrow and scanty Principles, they are Bigotted to the Service of, without any Regard to the Publick, or the Interest of Dissenting Parties, who may claim an equal Right to the Protection of the Law, and are acted with a more absolute Zeal for the present *Government* and *Liberty* of the *Subject*.

If we in *Scotland* had not felt the woful Effects of their Tyranny; it is likely a less Degree of Jealousie wou'd have serv'd turn; but the Impression it made is hardly cool upon our Minds. The Persecution we fell under by an Exorbitant *Church Power*, made such a Wound as is ghastly enough to consider; and tho' the Anguish is, in some measure, abated, and skin'd over by the Sovereign Balsom of *Liberty*, and the Restoration of our *Church Government*, yet, as the Change and Alteration of the Air, affects Old Bruises, so the great Alterations and Changes in the State alarm us, especially when they seem to proceed from Principles that have an Appearance of the Old Bloody Complexion. Sufferings are not so agreeable to Humane Nature, but we may start at the Apprehensions of Danger, how groundless soever they may be, without being Censur'd as Ridiculous. 'Tis no Crime to be afraid of the Fire that once scorcht us, and had almost Given the finishing Stroke to our Valuable Blessings. Whether any Prospect of this Kind presents it self from the Circumstances we are in, let Impartial Reason judge, and then we shall see whether such an Alteration is not more than probable. Such Measures and Proceedings are intended to produce suitable Effects; the Means and the End bears some Proportion to each other. And whatever eventually proves otherwise, it is owing to the Over-ruling Hand of Providence which often interrupts the Course of Humane Affairs, and directs to an End so far besides the Intentions of Men, that it justly challenges our Reverence to the Wisdom of *Divine Government*, which can with so much ease supersede the most pernicious Scheme of Humane Affairs, when it is necessary for some eminent Illustration of his Glory, and the Safety of his People. It's well our Confidence is above Men, who commonly make Interest the Rule of Right and Wrong, and only regard the Laws of Civil Societies and Humanity no further than just will serve a Turn, or else represent them with such false Glosses, as are only calculated to feed the Humour and Enmity of a Prevailing *Faction*.

What can we expect as the Result of this *Union*, while such a Law is in force as enjoins the *Sacramental Test* to be the Qualification of every *Civil and Military Trust*. How can it be imagin'd that ever such an *Union* can be for Common Good, or the Equal Interest of both Nations, when the Terms are so very unequal? The Foundations of our *Government* have been unhing'd; our *Fundamental Laws* chang'd; our *Constitution* quite alter'd, and yet the Repeal of the *Test*, which is but one single Law, can't be procured to Cement the Coalition. It seems more like a Political Conquest of our Liberties than a *Union*; while, by such a Fence as this is, one *Faction* effectually secures the *Guardianship* of it. This is a Power in Reserve, that if there is not a due Homage done to it, they will not find it difficult to strain an Article to Oblige us to it. Articles are as little likely to prevail against Power, as the *Laws of Sicily* were against the *Sword of Pompey*.

This.

This is a just Prejudice, and no incon siderable Argument of our Fears ; and the Quarrel we have commenc'd against it, is not founded upon Superficial Reasons, or meer Civil Inconveniencies, tho' this carrys a Weight sufficient. But it is a Notorious Affront to Religion, a Scandal to a Christian Nation, an Engine of Prophanes, contriv'd to undermine the Reverence that we should bear to Divine Institutions. It is turning Religion into a Common Waste, and prostituting it to the meanest Services of *Politick Contrivance*, and forcing it to Lacquey after the Power and Interest of a Faction.

But least this should fall under the Censure of a Heap of Words, without the Force of Reason and Evidence, I shall represent its Inconsistency.

1. *With the Rule of our Holy Religion.*
2. *With our Civil Interest.*

1. I shall represent the Inconsistency of this *Law*, with the Rule of our *Holy Religion*, tho' I am sensible whatever Argument comes from this Quarter, will be but of little Weight with Prophane *Politicians*. Religion is the Subject of Burlesque, and too much the Common Scorn of the Age ; and there is no further Regard to it, then as it serves the Politick Designs of those that reach at nothing beyond their own Interest; it being only credited as a Scheme of *Enthusiasm*, and originally intended as an Artifice by their Predecessors, to draw in Persons to their Party, and calculated as an Impostion upon Mankind to serve Secular Ends and Purposes. This would be an Affront to the Age we live in, if the Charge were not justify'd from such Common Principles and Practices as stand in a direct Opposition to the *Doctrines* and *Rules of Religion*; and does evidently shew we are as much Brutify'd and sunk into Sensuality, as if the World was winding up its Bottom, and we were Ripe for the General Conflagration. We run Parallel with the worst of Times, insomuch that we may express our selves in the Words of a Heathen Poet,

** Quorum Sceleri non irvenit ipsa
Nomen, & nullo posuit Natura Metabo.*

* Juv. Sat.
13.

Religion is a Reproach to a Man's Character, and he seems in a manner, as Ridiculous as *Noah* did to the Old World, or *Lot* to the *Sodomites*. I could wish all this Warmth was mistaken Zeal, and only the Effect of an Intemperate Pen ; but it is too visible to be without Reason, and the Consideration of it presses me with that Weight, that I can hardly encourage my self to enter upon any Argument, that may seem like the Defence of Religion against the unreasonable Insults of the Prophane Age.

Good, Sir, excuse this Digression ; I shall however proceed, and as clearly as I can, evince the Contrariety of this Law to the Rules of our *Holy Religion*.

1. It is apparent to all good Men, that this *Test Act* requires an End that must consequently prophan it, and such as bears no Propriety to the Original Design of it.

Let's.

Matth. 26. Let's consult the sacred Oracles, and see how they direct. Jesus
 26, 27, 28. took Bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to the Disciples, and said,
*Take eat, this is my Body: And he took the Cup and gave Thanks, and
 gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my Blood of the
 New Testament, which is shed for many for the Remission of Sins.* So in
 Luk. 22. 19. another Gospel they are required to eat and drink in Remembrance of him.
 1 Cor. 11. This is the Account the Apostle Paul had received of the Lord, and
 23, 24. has given to us to do this in Remembrance of me. The Sense of all
 which amounts to this, that these common Elements should be receiv-
 ed as a *Memorial* of his Sufferings, in regard of the Cause, Occasion,
 Manner, and Ends thereof. This is the plain End of the Institution,
 and there is an Aptitude in all the Circumstances of this great Solem-
 nity, and in the various Actions that are requir'd of us to give a just
 Representation of the Extent of his Sufferings; and whatever subor-
 dinate Ends may be thought of or imply'd in this, are suitable to the
 glorious End of his Dying for us. This Sense is confirm'd by the Do-
 ctrine of the *Church of England*, as contain'd in their *Liturgy, Articles,*
 and *Homilies*, and by the concurring Opinions of several of their
 Divines.

In the *Liturgy* the Minister is directed to use this Exhortation be-
 fore the celebration of the Sacrament: *Dearly Beloved, I purpose, thro'
 God's assistance, to administer to all such as shall be religiously and devoutly
 despos'd, the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ,
 to be by them received in Remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion,
 whereby we alone obtain the Remission of our Sins, and are made Partakers
 of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

In Article 28. they say, *It is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's
 Death, insomuch that such as rightly, worthily, and with Faith receive the
 same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of Christ, and likewise the
 Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.*

Homily the 21st, *Now with like or rather with more Brevity you shall
 hear how many Sacraments there be that were instituted by our Saviour
 Christ, and are to be continued and received of every Christian in due Time
 and Order, and for such purpose as our Saviour Christ willed them to be
 received.*

Ep. Kidder in his Discourse of the Lord's Supper. The Opinions of all the most religious Divines harmonize in this Point. Says one, *The Ends of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are these that follow: 1. The Renewal of that Covenant which we enter'd into in our Baptism. 2. That we should Remember the Lord Jesus Christ in laying down his Life for us. 3. That Christians might by it be united together in the strictest Bond of Love and Charity. 4. Another great End of this Sacrament is, That we might have a full assurance of God's Readiness to bestow upon us a Pardon of our Sins, and the great Mercies of the Gospel, which God hath declared himself ready to bestow upon all those who perform the Conditions of the new Covenant.*

Another says, *This Mystery was instituted as a Federal and Covenant Rite, to be used under the Gospel, to engage all such as use it to the strict observation of that Religion which is establish'd by the Gospel.*

I might

I might add numbers to the Confirmation of all this, who have writ upon this Subject, if it were not a trespass upon your Patience. This is sufficient to determine the End of this Institution, and that the secular Purpose this *Test-Act* principally aims at, is such an intolerable perversion of the use of it, as is contrary to the perfect *Rule of Faith*, the Establish'd *Doctrine of the Church of England*, and the Sentiments of the most devout and judicious Members of it.

How then is it possible to reconcile two such differing Ends to this divine *Institution*, unless there was something in the Nature of it that was accommodated to answer both? For there is a vast Difference between eating and drinking to remember the Death of Christ, and to qualify our selves for a Place in the *Civil Government*. Nay, Men have been driven to it to obtain a Licence to sell Ale; for so low has these holy *Mysteries* been prostituted, who perhaps have known nothing of its Institution, and consider'd no other use of it but the securing of some poor secular Advantage, which without taking they would have lost. Is there any thing in the *Sacrament* that has the least Analogy or Resemblance to such a secular Design? Let's consider the Signs and the Things signified: Bread and Wine are the representing Signs of his Body and Blood, whereby are signified to us the Merit of his Passion, and all the glorious Effects of his Mediation, and the certainty of these Mercies to those who by Faith apply them to themselves. This is *spiritual Food*, and ought to be taken and Art. 33. eaten in a spiritual manner, and to spiritual ends and purposes; then what relation can a Civil Trust have to such a Spiritual Ordinance, unless you will carry it beyond the Intention of the first Author of it, or destroy the spiritual Signification and Sense of this holy Mystery? Sure this is a Crime equal to that of the *Corinthians*, who had prostituted it to the Service of Luxury and Wantonness, and deserves an equal degree of Punishment.

Farther, It is an Insolence beyond imagination, in usurping an Authority which no Power on Earth can lay the least Claim to, to apply divine Institutions to such Ends as only serve the Interest of Politick Societies; their Nature and Original, as has been said, are so distinct from secular Affairs, as that they can't be intended or designed for such an Accommodation. Therefore the supreme Power runs into an Exorbitancy which it has no Commission for, to apply the Sacrament to such an End as it is not appropriated to; unless it can be suppos'd that any are infatuated with this wild Imagination, that the Laws of Heaven, which are form'd by an unerring Wisdom, can be subjected to the Amendments of *Earthly Potentates*. This would be such a Liberty as our own *Civil Constitution* will not admit of; if the Laws are construed to serve such Purposes as are remote from the Reason and Design of them, it would be dangerous, if not destructive to the *Legislative Power*; therefore in some Cases a Deviation from the Direction of the Law is made High Treason, as in that of Mony rais'd by Parliament, when it is alienated from the special Use they appropriate it to. And is it less Treason against the Authority of

of Christ, to prostitute his Laws to such mean Uses as they never were appointed to? Which must infer either an Invasion upon his Prerogative, or else that it is within the Verge of humane Authority to pervert the Laws of Christ as may be most convenient for the common Interest of Civil Societies.

What may be objected against this will be the *Title of the Act*, which is, *An Act for preventing Dangers which may happen from Popish Recusants*.

I do not at all question the hearty Concurrence of all true *Protestants* in promoting this Design. The frequent Attempts of that Party upon our Religion and Constitution, had made it necessary to find out some proper Methods for our Common Security; but still the Means should be regular and correspondent to the Rule of *Justice* and *Equity*. There are unlawful Means as well as Ends, and a Defect in either does entirely cancel the virtue of the Action. *We are not to do Evil that Good may come of it*. How then can it be justified, to prostitute the most Sacred Mysteries of Religion in order to preserve it? This is but purging it of Superstition to debauch it with the grossest Immoralities, which certainly are more unsuitable to the Dignity and Design of Religion, and the most expeditious way to bring it into Contempt, and to introduce Atheism; besides, it is a confiderable Reflection on the Wisdom of the Nation, and also on the very Principles of the Reformation, as if they were built on so weak a Foundation, that nothing could be thought on for its Safety but such Methods as are inconsistent with the very End of Religion it self.

But there might be a farther View in this, and it might be what many of the Promoters of this *Law* are more irreconcilable to, and that was, to Guard against what they call *Fanaticism*. This is a Term of Reproach, and a great Impropriety, unless it could be justified from the Principles of Dissenters in *England*. However, it was judg'd proper enough to serve the purpose of branding Men of Conscience with the most odious Character. If this Law did not spring from these malignant Principles, yet it may be evident they had a powerful Influence in the passing of it, if there is any regard to the Observation of a worthy Gentleman that has writ upon this Subject, who expresses himself thus:

Collection
of State
Tracts,
Vol. I.
P. 703.

' But if you please, Sir, to recollect your self, and call to Mind
' that this Act of Parliament was made in that very Year that Alderman *Love* complain'd in the House of Commons of the Invasion that
' King *Charles II.* had made upon the Law, in issuing a Declaration
' for Liberty of Conscience against express Acts of Parliament, (for
' which that Gentleman hath been deservedly had in very great Esteem
' by *Englishmen* of all Persuasions) you may give a shrewd Guess out
' of whose Quiver this Arrow flew; for altho' the Word *Popish Recusant* was made use of, yet it is to me very plain, that the *Protestant Recusant* was intended, and that out of Revenge, because he
' was then so just to the Liberty and Property of the Subject in general, that he would rather abridge himself of his Liberty of serving
' God

‘ God according to his own private Conscience, than contribute any thing to the placing a Dispensing Power in the Crown, of which our Laws are profoundly ignorant.

This is the old Dance of Politicks that had its date in an Age wherein the Notions of Arbitrary Power had their first Rise, and the principal Concern of the major Part of the Bishops was to establish their secular Dignity and Honour, tho’ it was by introducing the highest Profaneness, on purpose to incapacitate Men of Piety, and those that had any just sense of the Liberty of Mankind, from making any Opposition. This is agreeable to the Account we have of Matters in the Reign of King James I.

‘ But among all the Dances that these Times were guilty of, none History of England, of the Maskerado’s presented so horrid a Vizard as the Churchman’s. Vol. 2. For some of the Bishops pretending Recreations and Liberty to the Servants and common People, (of which they carved to themselves Pag. 709. too much already) procured the King to put out a Book to permit Dancing about Maypoles, Church-Ales, and such debauch’d Exercises, upon the Sabbath-Day, after Evening-Prayer, (being a specious way to make the King and them acceptable to the Rout) Which Book came out with a Command enjoining all Ministers to read it to their Parishioners, and to approve of it ; and those that did not, were brought into the High Commission, imprison’d, and suspended. — This Book being a Trap to catch some conscientious Men that they could not otherwise with all their Cunning ensnare ; for they would preach the Gospel in a Fool’s Coat, (as some of ‘em exprest it) rather than be silenc’d for a Surplice ; and their conjuring of them with Cross in Baptism, and the Circle of the Ring in Marriage, could not make a well-compos’d Reason and a sound Conscience then start at it : But when so frightful an Apparition as the Dancing-Book appear’d, some of the Ministers left all for Fear, others by Force, they were so terrified with it. These and such-like Machinations of the Bishops, to maintain their temporal Greatness, Ease, and Plenty, made the Stones in the Walls of their Palaces, and the Beam in the Timber afterward cry out, moulder away, and come to nothing : Whereas if those in most Authority had not been so Pragmatical, but Holy, Prudent, and Godly Men, (as Archbishop Abbot and others of the Function were) their Light might still have shin’d on the Mount, and not have gone out as it did, offensive to the Nostrils of the Rubbish of the People.

This was an ill President to Posterity, and it had so unhappy an Influence in the succeeding Reign, as to lead them to act the same Part over again, which met with the Disgust it was liable to from all good Men ; and certainly was a Means, concurring with other arbitrary Proceedings, to spread about those Prejudices as workt the Ruin of the whole Hierarchy. This was a continued Vein of Politicks, and it was the same Scheme of Principles usher’d in the *Et Cetera Oath, Superstition, and Innovations in Doctrine* into the Church. These Methods were so admirably suited to carry on the Design of a Despotick Independent

pendent Church Government, that as soon as ever Episcopacy was restor'd, they run into the same Measures. This was it that straitened the Terms of Conformity, and required such Solemn Declarations to all the Parts of the Prelatical Constitution. This gave Birth to that absur'd Maxim of, *No Bishop, no King*: And it had no inconsiderable Influence in passing that Declaration, *That it is not Lawful upon any Pretence whatsoever, to take Arms against the King, &c.* and that they should not at any time endeavour any Alteration in Church or State. This was a plain Design upon the Constitution, and of laying the Foundations of Episcopal Jurisdiction on the Ruin of our Liberty, and laying Snares for those that wanted the Conscience and Villany to betray the Liberties of their Country. This was seconded by the Doctrines of *Passive Obedience* and *Nonresistance*, which might still have pass'd as a Current Article of the Doctrine of the Church, if Providence had not confuted it and rescu'd our Libertys, which were almost swallow'd up by it. All the Severities which fell upon Dissenters, the *Test Act*, *Occasional Bill*, were Branches springing from the same Root of Bitterness, and principally intended to Disarm Dissenters of all Legal Power, and to render them incapable of Supporting the Civil Interest of the Nation, which they were always zealous for. When all these Considerations are join'd together, how could it be expected that Divine Institutions should meet with the Regard which was due to them, when it was not Religion, but a Temporal Grandeur they principally endeavour'd to establish; for it was impossible for Men of Sedateness and Consideration, who had the least generous Concern for the Honour of Religion, to venture upon such Measures as notoriously tend to debase it to so vile a Purpose, as to make it the Instrument of Oppression, and depriving Men of their Natural Rights and Liberties.

2. Another Objection against this *Act*, arises from the Obligation it lays on all in any Post in the *Civil Government* to take the Sacrament, without any Regard to the Fitness the Law of Christ requires before we make our Approach to those Solemn Mysteries. The Words of the *Act* are thus, *And be it further Enacted, That all, and every Person or Persons that shall be admitted, entred, placed, or taken into any Office or Offices, Civil or Military, or shall receive any Pay, Salary, Fee or Wages, by reason of any Patent or Grant of his Majesty, or shall have Command or Place of Trust from, or under his Majesty, his Heirs and Successors, &c. shall Receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the Usage of the Church of England, &c.* Is it not a just and a fair Inference from the Tenour of this *Act*, that the bearing any Office in the Civil Government, is suppos'd to be a sufficient Qualification for the Partaking of the Lord's Supper? Otherwise the Obligation to so Solemn a Duty, should have been limited to those Qualifications Christ hath required, and which are suitable to the Nature of the Institution. But what Respect is there to this? Is it not then a Notorious Invasion of the Prerogative of Christ, and a superseding of his Law as Unnecessary? Does it not ruin the Fence that

that Christ hath set up to guard against the irreverent Use of such Sacred Symbols of his Presence. The further Consideration of this will make it appear more plain and evident. Therefore I shall represent,

1. What the Law of Christ reveal'd in Scripture does require.
2. The Inconsistency of this Act to the Rule of Scriptures.

1. What the Law of Christ reveal'd in Scriptures does require as a necessary Qualification to our Partaking of the Lord's Supper. This is easily resolved from this Passage of Scripture. * *But let a Man examin himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's-Body.* The Sense of this Text will be best receiv'd as adjusted by the stated Doctrine of the Church of England, and by the Judgment of their most eminent Divines.

* *The Common Prayer gives this Account of it, that they might be worthy Partakers of the Lord's-Supper. First examin your Lives and before the Conversations by the Rules of God's Commandments, and wherein soever ye shall perceive your selves to have offended either by Will, Word, or Deed, there bewail your own Sinsfulness, and to Confess your selves to Almighty God with full Purpose of Amendment of Life.*

* Again, Dearly Beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all Persons diligently to try and examine themselves before they presume to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup; for as the Benefit is great, if with a true penitent Heart and lively Faith we receive that Holy Sacrament, (for then we Spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ and drink his Blood, then we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, we are one with Christ, and Christ with us:) So is the Danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our Damnation, not considering the Lord's-Body: We kindle God's Wrath against us, we provoke him to plague us with diverse Diseases and sundry kinds of Death.

So in the Book of Homilies there are Directions to the same Purpose. * *Wherefore that it be not said to us as it was to the Guest of that Great Supper: Friend, how camſt thou in hither, not having the Marriage Garment.* * *And that we may fruitfully use St. Paul's Counsel: Let a Man prove himself, and so eat of that Cup: We must certainly know that three things be requisite in him which would seemly, and as becometh such High Mysteries, resort to the Lord's Table, that is first a right and worthy Estimation and Understanding of this Mystery.*

2. To come in a sure Faith.
3. To have Newness or Purity of Life, to succeed the Receiving of the same.

* Exhort
at the time
of Adminis-
trating the
Lord's-Sup-
per.

* Page 176. * Dr. Hammond delivers his Opinion consonant to this in his Practical Catechism. Quest. What is required of them which come to the Lord's Supper?

Ans. No more but that every Man is infinitely concern'd to have his Soul always posseſt with every part of that Preparation; that the careless Oscitancy and fatal Stupidity of the World, in never so much as considering whether they have any of them or no, is a most prodigious Thing; that the time of preparing our selves for the Sacrament, is a very fit time for that Examination; that till that be done, and all and each of those Graces found sincere in our Hearts, we ought not to come to that Holy Sacrament: The Particulars of which we must thus examine, and which we must thus require of our selves, are five, 1. True Repentance. 2. A stedfast Purpose to lead a new Life; a Resolution to reform all, and that Resolution such as will stand fast in the Hour of Tryal and Temptation. 3. A lively Faith in God's Mercy thro' Christ; a Faith, and that a Vital one. 4. A Thankful Remembrance and Commemoration of his Death. 5. Charity with all Men.

It would be endless, as well as unnecessary, to add the Opinions of as many of the most eminent and devout Church men as agree in this, having offered what is sufficient to lay before you the Qualification which is required of all those that Partake of the Lord's-Supper. Certainly, if there was no Obligation from any Precept, yet the very Nature and Design of the Institution requires it. The rememb'reng the Death of Christ is a solemn engaging our selves to a Conformity to him, and to answer all the Ends of his Dying for us, else to what purpose, if we consider this purely as a Religious Action, do we celebrate the Lord's-Supper. If Atheism, Ignorance, Impenitence, Prophaness, are no Bars to the Partaking of the Sacrament, what Regard is there then to a Divine Constitution, wherein all the Methods of our Proceeding in thisAffair are settled? Or how (since the Church is oblig'd to admit such Persons) can they reconcile their Doctrine and Practice, when such offer themselves to their Communion, whose Principles and Practices render them altogether incapable according to their own settled and stated Doctrine?

2. It will easily appear (if these are the Qualifications which are required by the Law of Christ) that this Law is inconsistent with it.

1. If a Man does examine himself according to the Rule the Apostle prescribes in the Account he gives of this Institution; and if he is thereby convinc'd (tho' he could comply with the Usage of the Church of England) that the Receiving of the Blessed Sacrament as a Qualification for a Civil Trust, is inconsistent with the Nature and End of so Holy an Institution. Therefore he is afraid to comply with it, least, by eating and drinking for such unworthy Ends, he should be guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ, and eat and drink Damnation to himself. Yet this Law incapacitates him, however great his Ability may be, for the Serving of the Government.

2. If a Man be convinc'd that he is really unfit by his *Excess* and *Debauchery*; and that it would be the highest Prophanesy to receive the Lord's-Supper, while blemished with so many Immoralities, (tho' otherwise a Member of the Church of *England*) yet he must venture on his Damnation, or loose his Office. And is not this then a barbarous Imposition to fetter Men with such dangerous Temptations, that either they must comply against the Force of their Conviction, or loose all means of a present Subsistence, and thereby expose themselves and their Families to Beggary. This is confirm'd by an Instance that would strike one with Horror to mention, which I shall relate in the Words of an Author of undoubted Credit.

* We cannot but * The Re-
often remember what happened 3 or 4 Years ago; a Man that led presentati-
an ill Life, but frequented the Church, was oblig'd not to come on of the
to the Sacrament, and press'd by the Officers to come; he yet de- Cafe of
clin'd, knowing himself unfit. At length being threatned and ter- Diffenters,
rified came; but said to some present at the time of that Solemn in a Sheet,
Action, that he came only to avoid being undone, and took them by Mr. How.
to Witness, that what he there receiv'd, he took only as Common
Bread and Wine, not daring to receive them as the *Body and Blood*
of Christ.

3. If a Man is never so incapable and unfit for this Holy Communion by profest Infidelity, or Ignorance of the Nature and End of this Institution, or by being guilty of the greatest Enormities against the Rule of Religion, or Common Humanity; yet the Church is oblig'd to receive him, if he offers himself to that Sacrament, in order to qualify himself for some Post in the Civil Government, notwithstanding all the Doctrine and Order of the Church to the contrary.

1. It's apparent the Law requires it of all Persons, without any Limitation, as has been before expres'd.

2. It is the Opinion of some, that the Minister, who refuses the Sacrament to any bearing Office, is not only liable to Suspension, but responsible for all the Damages such a Person suffers by the Refusal.

3. Usually the Persons are never questioned; the Practice is so general, that it would be difficult to find an Exception, insomuch that it seems as if it was no matter how ill a Character a Person bore, if it can be covered with the Name of Church-man; which is an undeniable Demonstration that it is not the Honour of Religion, but the Secular Interest of a Party that is principally regarded. What is more opposite to the whole Design and Constitution of Religion than Immorality? The Intendment of it is principally to reform the World. And should not the Church act pursuant to this End? Tis the Church that ought to recommend it, and to enforce it with these Arguments it proposes, to answer so glorious a Purpose. It is notorious the *Church of England* has degenerated from this End, by admitting such to their Communion, as are a Scandal to our *Common Faith*. This might be avouch'd by any who have the least Conversation with Mankind, and it would be endless to produce all the

the Matters of Fact which might be heap'd up to evidence the Truth of this. If one was to make a Scrutiny into the Lives of all the Civil and Military Officers of the Kingdom, however capable they might be for the Service of the Nation; yet one would be at a loss to apprehend whether many of 'em had any Sense of Christianity, unless it can be suppos'd that the highest Profaneness can ever be reconcil'd to it. It is in a manner become as common as a Proverb among Sea Officers to make this profane Invitation, *Come, let's go and take the Sop:* And yet this Law qualifies these Wretches to be Partakers of the most Solemn Mysteries of Religion. Who knows not that Cursing, and Swearing, and Drukenness, is their common Character; and are these so consistent with the Rules of Christianity as to imagin them fit Members of any *Christian Church?*

This Leaven of Profaneness has spread it self throughout the far greater number of both Civil and Military Officers: There wants Words to expres the Atheism, and Blasphemy, and innumerable Impieties that are commonly vented; and yet that they should be receiv'd as Members of the *Church of England*, is strange and unaccountable, when by their avow'd Principles and Practices they are Enemies to the very being of any Religion. There are such evident Reasons against this Practice as can't well be answer'd.

1. It is contrary to the *Doctrine and Rules of the Church of England*, as express'd in the *Liturgy and Canons*. The *Liturgy*, as is before mention'd in the Exhortation before the Sacrament, *Advertiseth and Admonisheth such sort of People, that they do not in any wise presume to come;* and adds likewise, *That it is to be administer'd to those that are religiously dispos'd*. The 25th *Canon* is to the same sense. What signifies these Doctrines and Rules of Discipline without a due Regard to the Execution of them? But what room is there to hope for this, while the Law of the Land lays waste the *Doctrine of the Church*, and absolutely blunts the Edge of Ecclesiastical Discipline, which the more licentious *Clergy* (who are the major Part) are willing enough to connive at, as having a Tendency to secure their secular Preferments, which is the only Thing they aim at?

2. It is a considerable Reflection on the *Clergy of the Church of England*, as if they were wanting to represent those Grievances to the *Parliament* which such a Law oppresses them with, by laying so many *Remora's* in their way to a conscientious Discharge of their Ministerial Office. Here is a Man swallow'd up in Debauchery, that has found Interest or Money enough to prefer him to some Trust in the Government: The Law requires them to administer the Sacrament to him; but with what Conscience can they do it, without betraying the Ends of their Office, and giving up the *Canons and Doctrines of the Church* as insignificant Trifles? Does not this look like the highest Prevarication and Partiality, that there should be so much Zeal spent about a Ceremony, and so little against the approach of the grossest Immoralities? To give the Sacrament without Kneeling, would be thought inconsistent with that Reverence that is due to it; and

and yet that it should be agreeable to the Dignity of it, to give it to one that wants all the Marks of Sobriety, is a Riddle past my Comprehension: And it would be a particular Satisfaction to all good People, to know how the *Clergy* can clear themselves of that Reproof our Saviour gave the *Pharisees*, *That they were Conscientious about Tithing of Mint, and Cummin, and Annice; but neglected the weightier Things of the Law.*

3. This strengthens those of Atheistical *Principles* in their Prejudices against *Religion*; and has some weight in it to confirm their Opinion, that Religion is only a Device of Politick Contrivance, and calculated to reconcile the Populace to an easier Subjection to the *Civil Government*. Tho' this might be easily confuted on other Principles, yet it is impossible our Scheme of Politicks should give any Solution to it. For while Religion is prostituted to secular Purposes, and made use of to Qualify a Man for an Office, who will the next Moment affront the Rules of it with the grossest immoralities; and while it is made use of to Monopolize all Power, and put it into the Hands of one Faction; while it is made use of to deprive Men of their Natural Right, who have an equal Privilege to the Benefit of the Law; nay generally such as are more united in their Zeal for the *Queen* and the *Present Government*, and the legal *Liberty* of the *Subject*; It must needs establish their Principles, and expose the Honour of Religion, while it is made so visible a Pretence to serve such Ends as have not the least affinity to it.

4. It gives the greatest Encouragement to *Debauchery* and *Profaneness*. While the Law makes no difference between Vice and Virtue, but gives a *Toleration* without distinction, to all Good and Bad, to come to the Sacrament; and likewise lays a Restraint upon Ecclesiastical Authority, which ought to be exercised for the Regular Administration of *Divine Institutions*, and to preserve the Dignity of Religion; what can we expect but a flood of Wickedness to break in upon us, when the Fences are destroy'd which were some Security against the invading Corruptions of Men? It is this that hardens Men in their Wickedness, and brings Religion into Contempt; or at least it feeds such a fatal Presumption as this is, that Eating and Drinking at the Lord's Table is a sufficient Indication of their Title to, and Fitness for *Eternal Life*. Besides the Injury this does to Religion, it is such a Treachery to the Souls of Men as will admit of no Composition. This Practice converts the Table of our *Lord* into a Table of *Devils*, and seemingly represents as if *Christ* and *Belial* were now reconcil'd; which renders it abhor'd by all good Men, as the greatest Reflexion that possibly can be thrown upon Religion, and upon the Honour of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

Thus far this *Test Act* has been consider'd as it stands in opposition to the Rules of Religion; and however inconsiderable the Arguments may appear to some, yet they are thought by others sufficient to give a just Prejudice to this Law, as requiring that which interferes with that honourable Esteem that is due to dyvine Institutions; whereby

it will create a perpetual Abhorrence in the Hearts of all good Men against such Compliances as visibly tend to the Prostitution of the Body and Blood of Christ. I shall trouble you with no more upon this Head, but shall consider it in relation to our *Civil Interest*, and endeavour to represent to you its Inconsistency unto that as well as to our holy *Religion*. Here I must follow it in a wide Compass, and trace it in all the malignant Influences that it has upon the Common Good of *Great-Britain and Ireland*.

I shall begin with *England*, where this Law had its first Rise, and shall submit it to the unprejudic'd Judgment of any, whether it is not Repugnant to the real *Interest* of *England*, a Weakning of our *Constitution*, and of the happy *Settlement* and *Government* we are under. To illustrate this Matter with all the Evidence and Light I can, it will be necessary to give, 1. Some Account of the Principles and Behaviour of *Dissenters*, whom this Law affects, and puts on the same Level with *Papists*, as if they were equal Enemies to our *Constitution* and *Government*. 2. I shall advance those Reasons that render it impolitick.

1. It will be necessary to give a View of the *Principles of Dissenters*, which are not to be understood of their Religion, but of Government. Were their Adversaries admitted to be competent Judges of this Matter, (as far as I am able to inform my self, their Principles are represented with a quite different Turn than what they are in reality; which can admit of no other Interpretation, than an ill Design of rendring them Obnoxious, and to justify all the Severities they have been loaded with, and if it were possible, to aggravate and increase their Hardships.

It is evident the *Dissenters* in *England* (supposing some few to have imbib'd *Republican Principles*, tho' probably upon Scrutiny scarce one in Ten thousand would be found to acknowledge the Charge) have been free in declaring for the *Liberties of Mankind*, against the *Surpurations* of all Governments, distinguish'd by what Kind or Form soever, as being contrary to the *Fundamental Rights* and Freedom they derive from the *Law of Nature*. This Principle has led them into a Fondness of the Constitution of the Civil Government of their own Native Country; which they can't but judge has provided a happy Accommodation between a Despotick Monarchy, and the Confusion that a meer Commonwealth lies expos'd to; and has so adjusted the Bounds of the Sovereign Authority, that it can't exert, it self without an illegal dispensing Power, to the Ruin of the Rights and Property of the Subject. Upon which account they have been zealous Affirters of the Civil Liberties of their Country, against the Encroachment of Arbitrary Power; and have accordingly declared against such Maxims as were only calculated to feed the Extravagant Lust of Dominion, to wit, *Illegal Prerogatives*, *Dispensing Power*, *Unlimited Extent of Kingly Authority*, the divine Right of *Lineal Succession*, the Doctrine of *Passive Obedience* and *Non Resistance*; all which was once almost the only Gospel that was preach'd from the Pulpit,

Pulpit, and vented as current Divinity, till it brought them to the prospect of such a Scene of Misery as confuted this wild *Hypothesis*, and gave them a just Reason to suspect that this was preparatory to their own Bondage, and to a form'd Conspiracy, under the Mask of Authority, against the *Protestant Religion* and *Civil Liberty*: So vast a difference is there between Speculation and Experience; for no Argument, however just and cogent, could ever have been sufficient to have baffled these destructive Notions, that might have prov'd so fatal in the Consequence, had not Arbitrary Power felt so heavy that the Burden became intolerable.

It is own'd these were not the *Principles of Dissenters*; nor did they ever abet or draw a Pen in the defence of them; but the contrary, as has been declar'd, has been the unanimous Sentiment of the whole Body. Had they been charg'd with Principles of this Nature, the Accusation which is drawn up against them would have been set off with the greater Pretence and colour of Reason, That in the Time of King *James* they fell in with the Measures of *Dispensing Power*. It is probable a Release from long and severe Prosecutions might transport some of them beyond the Rules of Decency in their Expressions of Joy; or at least if we consider the particular Person that presented the Address so much insisted upon, the Pardon of a Son might carry fatherly Affection beyond the Rule of Reason: So allowing upon the whole for the common Infirmities of humane Nature, and the Weakness of Mens Passions, this is easily Excusable. However, in all these Addresses there was no express Concurrence to any of the Arbitrary Proceedings of those Times, and that the Majority of 'em were against the Dispensing Power, tho' they had immediate Ease from Persecution by it, is own'd by *Roger Coke* in his *Detection*, tho' he was a profess'd Enemy to their Dissent. And 'tis evident in it self, that there were never any such Politick Maxims advanc'd by them, as had any Tendency to betray the *Liberties* of their *Country*.

Let us now take a View of their *Conduit* and *Behaviour*, which will furnish us with the fairest Comment on their Principles, and give the clearest Representation how far they are Friends or Enemies to the Interest of their Country; by which it will appear whether they are to be trusted in any Place in the Civil Government. It will be necessary to anticipate all *Objections*, especially so weighty a one as that of *Rebellion* against K.*Charles I.* which they are commonly charg'd with, and has been made use of to justifie all rigorous Proceedings against them; but with what Justice this can be fastned upon them, I shall leave to your impartial Consideration.

In the clearing up this, I shall offer the Reasons, 1. That drew the Parliament into this War: 2. Consider the Consequences of it, and how far the *Presbyterians* were concern'd in both of them.

* Lords Debates in the Convention of Original Contract.

1. It is a Principle of undoubted Certainty, and on which the late glorious *Revolution* turn'd, * That the Civil Constitution is founded upon *Contract*, whereby the People have not entirely subjected themselves to the arbitrary and uncertain Will of the Prince, without reserving some *Right* and *Liberties* to themselves. According to the Tenour of this Contract, the essential Branches of the Supreme Power are shar'd between the Prince and People ; and if you reckon up all the Integrating Parts of it, there is only a *Moiety* lodg'd in the Person of the Prince. Legislation, which is the most eminent and considerable Part of *Sovereignty*, belongs to the *Two Houses of Parliament*, as well as to the *Prince* ; and whatever Claims he may make to the Executive Power, yet he is under such legal Restrictions, that his Authority reaches no farther than the Law allows of.

2. Whether the People have a Power to defend the reserved *Rights* and *Liberties*, is a Question easily determin'd. The *Original Compact* entitles them to this, or else it is plain they have no Security at all for their *Constitution*, but it would be ruin'd at the pleasure of any Pr. without Opposition, who should once be affected with the Charms of *Arbitrary Power*. Besides, this is a natural Inference from the Law of Nature, That formed Societies are under as real Obligations to defend the *Rights* and *Liberties* whereof the common Good and Interest of the whole Body is concern'd, as private Persons can be from the Principles of Self-Preservation to defend themselves against all unjust Assaults.

3. That the *Rights* and *Liberties* of the People were Invaded by King *Charles I.* is notorious enough : The *Ship-Money*, *Loans*, *New Oaths* imposed upon the Subject, and other arbitrary *Taxes*, without consent of *Parliament*, is a sufficient Evidence. To enumerate all the Evils of that Reign, would be endless. The Principles of Despotick Power were openly abetted and promoted ; the Laws of the Land and Liberty of the Subject were under a continu'd Violation ; which wrought the Kingdom into such a Ferment, that nothing but Violence could rescue an Invaded *Constitution*, and *Civil Liberty* from the Approaching Chains of Slavery and miserable Bondage. It was not the legal Authority of the Prince which met with so much opposition, but Dominion without Law ; for had one been the measure of the other, it is not likely, nor could there have been any justifiable Pretence for throwing the Nation into such a dreadful Convulsion.

4. Supposing all these *Principles* to be false, and the Charge true in all the Circumstances of it, as represented by the opposite Party ; that is, if the Opposition made by the *Parliament* to those Arbitrary Measures be really Rebellion, how or which way can this be charg'd on

on the *Dissenters* has Principles in the Attempt? Unless this can be made good, it is unfair to make that to be the discriminating Character of a *Dissenter*, as if only the Principles and Practice of Rebellion center'd in them. If so, how came it to pass that Archbishop *Abbot* was Suspended for refusing to Licence *Montagu's* Book, which was writ with a design to encourage the extensive Reach of Arbitrary Power? Has not *Bilson*, *Andrews*, *Hooker*, *Jewel*, who were glorious Ornament's of the Church, wrote in the Justification of these Principles? Was not the Bishop of *Gloucester* Suspended for refusing to Swear never to alter the Government of the Church? Was it only the *Presbyterians* or the major part of them who made up that Parliament? The contrary to this will appear upon Enquiry from as good Authority as any who transmitt to us the History of those Times.

* He says the *Parliament* that first took up Arms against the *King*, * *Baxter's* was *Episcopal* and *Eraſtian*; and that many of the Members own'd Life, part they knew but one *Presbyterian* in the *House of Commons*. The General the *E. of Essex* was a Conformist, and the far greater part of the Officers such. *Arch-bishop William's* engag'd in the Parliaments Service, and divers others of the Conformable Clergy. The *Presbyterians* made so very inconsiderable a Figure, that they were not in a Capacity to give any Check to the Exorbitancy of those Times, or to contribute much to the Disorder of them: That upon the Whole, it is manifest the *Church of England* led the Van, and the most that can be said of the *Presbyterians*, they were only Accessories to this Rebellion.

But it may be objected as strange and unaccountable, that a Church Parliament should pull down the Church.

The Divine Right of *Episcopacy* was rather a Novel than an Establish'd Principle, and it was not so visible what Form of Church Government was of Divine Institution. It was plain that Episcopal Jurisdiction was founded on the Laws of the Land, which was a Constitution reconcileable enough to the Parliament. Had not *Laud* and his *Faction*, by affecting an Independency of Power on the Civil Government, brought it into Abhorrence, as appear'd by encouraging such Doctrines as were contrary to the *Articles of the Church of England*, by bringing *Innovations* into the Church, and by labouring to debauch the Nation with a *Book of Sports*, by imposing new *Oaths* on the *Clergy*, without Consent of *Parliament*. These, in Concurrence with many other Things, made them lookt upon as Dangerous Enemies to the Constitution: So that it was a grasping at a Power the Law never gave them, that blew up the whole *Hierarchy*. And no wonder the Nation was alarm'd when they not only beheld, but felt the Church and State degenerating into such an intolerable Tyranny, as would have ended in the entire Subversion of their *Religious* and *Civil Rights* and *Liberties*.

2. However accessory the *Presbyterians* were to the beginning of this War, yet certainly they were far from justifying the unhappy Consequences of it. The Liberty of *England* was so interwoven with the

Constitution, that they saw no Reason to espouse any Opinion inconsistent with its Preservation : And upon this Account they as warmly remonstrated against all the Designs of the *Parliament* upon the *Constitution*. * Accordingly there were early Attempts made to have removed *Cromwell*, whose Conduct gave Suspicion of some other Designs, than what were consistent with the Interest of the King and Kingdom : But his Power in the Army was too Great for the Opposition.

Did not their Friends in the House declare the King's Concessions from the *Isle of Wight*, a sufficient ground of Peace? For which the *Army*, by the underhand and subtle Management of *Cromwell*, turn'd them out of their Places in *Parliament*. Did not the *Presbyterians* make a Bold Remonstrance against bringing the King to Tryal, and cutting off his Head? Did they not oppose the War *Cromwell* made upon *Scotland*? Was it not upon the Account of their being *Favourers* to the *King* and *Kingdom*, that several *Presbyterian Ministers* were imprisoned; and for which Mr. *Love* lost his Head, notwithstanding the invidious Reflections that are thrown upon him? Did they not declare against the *Rump*, refuse the *Engagement* and the Observation of their *Fast* and *Thanksgiving-Days*, after they had chang'd the Cause? Did they not declare against the *Usurpation* of *Oliver*; and after all the Politick Arts he could use, he could never draw them into his Interest? Did they not in Conjunction with *Monk* bring in the *King*, when the *Episcopal Party* were not in a Condition to do him much Service? By all which we may judge; If the Civil Constitution be the stated Measure of the Interest of the Kingdom, they are far greater Friends to their Country, than those, whose continued Design has been to encourage Prerogative, and other Arbitrary Methods, to swallow up both our Laws and Liberties.

* Hist. of
England,
Vol. 3.
p. 238.

* Tho' the *Presbyterians* were Zealous for the Restoration of King *Charles the Second*, and as it happen'd at the Expence of their own Ease and Liberty; yet they were tenacious of their Old Principle of keeping close to the Constitution against all the Arbitrary Encroachments of his Reign. They neither abett'd his Prerogative, or Dispensing Power; witness the Speech *Alderman Love* made in the *House of Commons*. Nay, when the Folly and Rage of a Faction had found Interest to Pass such a Bill, wherein such an Oath was required, *That it was not lawful, upon any Pretence whatsoever, to take up Arms against the King, &c.* The Generality of them refus'd it, and rather chose a Banishment five Miles from a *Corporation*, than to justifie any Conduct that had any Tendency to betray the Liberties of their Country.

Their Opinion and Honesty in this Respect were sufficiently justifi'd by the *Lords* in *Parliament*; * for when the *Bishops* would have impos'd the same Oath on the *Lords* and *Commons*, several of the *Lords*, who look'd upon it as a Project to divide the *Protestants* and strengthen the *Papish Party*, entered their Protestation against it, as

Calamy's
Abridg.
p. 506.

Dc-

Destructive to the Privileges of the House and Liberty of the Kingdom.

This serves at least as an Argument that they are a sort of People who understand the true Interest of their Country, and are willing at any time to sacrifice their Ease rather than betray it. It was not without some Hazard to thir Lives and Estates, that they fell in with the General Sense of the Nation of Excluding the *Duke of York* from the *Succession*: Tho' the *Bishops* then gave a Disappointment to their Hopes, yet, when Necesity had corrected their Mistake, the Dissenters presently gave up their Resentments to the Publck Good, and fell in with all such Measures as were necessary for the Churches Security against *Papish* and Arbitrary Designs; tho' the Church had as little Reason to expect their Friendship, as they had contrary to all Humanity, to prosecute them with such a Scene of Hardships; yet their Generosity, as well as Love to the Common Safety, prevail'd over Prejudices, which, if they had given vent to them, might at that time have prov'd detrimental to the whole *Kingdom*. Thus, if Matters of Fact are any Evidence to justifie the Conduct of Dissenters, they are avowed Friends to the *Constitution* and Liberty of their *Country*, and not such a Pack of intolerable Rebels as the secret Enemies of the *Kingdom*, or Bigots to a Faction, would represent them; but that without any Hazard to the Government, or our present Settlement, they may be safely entrusted with any part of the Civil Administration.

It is therefore requisite to offer this Question, Where is the Policy of excluding such a sort of People from the Management of the Affairs of the Civil Government? It is the Interest of all Governments to make their Foundation as large and as secure as possible, especially when there is a pretended Claim to the Crown, and back'd with such potent and politick Adversaries, as requires the utmost Care and Diligence to Counterwork them; for should such a Claim take Place, the Consequences would be the utter Subversion of the *Protestant Religion*, and the Freedom we enjoy under an *English Government*. Can our Strength then be too powerful, or our Union too firm? Can we use too much Caution? Who can call it Wisdom or Prudence to keep open our Breaches? Or to nourish such Principles as must keep up our Divisions, which is certainly a Risk in the time of Publick Danger, unless there were the strongest Reasons to support them. But how this will appear, I shall freely lay before you.

1. To admit *Protestant Dissenters* into Places of Trust, would be no Prejudice, or any real Difservice to the Interest of the *Kingdom*: If it were so, it must be either because they have made some dangerous Attempts to ruin the *Constitution*, or because they entertain such Principles as are inconsistent with the Safety of it. As to the first of thele, the Common Charge will be (as has been mentioned) the Story of *Forty One*, &c. There has been enough said to clear at least

least the *Presbyterians* from the Crime of Rebellion ; they having no Hand in the first beginning of that Unnatural War, and how far soever they concur'd in taking up Arms, it was intentionally no further than to defend their just *Rights* they were entitled to, by Vertue of the Constitution ; and as far as they proceeded, would be justified by *Grotius*, and by the Opinions of several of the most eminent Doctos of the Church of *England* ; yet as they protested against the Consequences of that War, in several Matters of Fact, it is the unfairest Way imaginable to charge upon a Body of People the Transactions of some designing Men, or else of Persons that were hurry'd on by a Spirit of *Enthusiasm*, or secretly prompted and encourag'd by Popish Counsels, which they as much abhor and detest as the Accusers themselves. But suppose it were true, is there no room for Repentance ? The Church has quitted her Doctrine of *Passive Obedience* and *Non-resistance* ; and why may not Dissenters quit these fatal Principles of Rebellion ? Or must their Posterity needs adopt them, since we see their Loyalty from the time of the Revolution has been as distinguishing as that of the *Church* ; and it may be they have more unanimously express'd it, especially in their hearty Concurrence to the present Settlement and Protestant Succession.

Nor do they entertain Principles inconsistent with the Interest of the *Nation* ; or else the Church would never have run into Principles (the Dissenters espous'd) for their own Safety. The Doctrine of *Passive Obedience* and *Non-resistance* would never have given Check to the Extravagancies of *Popish* Counsels : For had several of the Political Maxims been as universally observ'd as they were zealously preach'd in the Reign King of *Charles II.* the Constitution of the *Church of England* must of necessity have been Popish.

The Apprehension of this soon determin'd the Church of *England* to take up Arms, contrary to their avow'd Principles for their own Defence, which had all along been censured as a Traiterous Position of the Dissenters.

But since the *Church of England* have justified this Position, it being that on which the Revolution turn'd, and which they value themselves upon having the greatest Hand in. It must be granted, that if these Principles are only appropriated to Dissenters, the Church are beholding to them, as well as the State for maintianing those Maximis that effectually opened the Way for our Deliverance and future Security.

2. It would be so far from being a Prejudice to the Interest of the Kingdom, that it would contribute to its highest Benefit and Advantage to admit Dissenters into Places of Trust, especially if *Unity* and *Strength* are any additional Security to our present *Establishment* and the Protestant Succession. To demonstrate this, take the following Reasons.

1. Did they not equalize the Zeal of the most forward Persons in the late glorious *Revolution*, and in the present Settlement? Take the exact Representation of their Management in the Words of an ingenious Author, * They have been true to this glorious Cause ever since, * Rights of in Parliament, in Places, and in their private Capacities. They who Dissenters, have had the Honour to Sit in Parliament, and have fallen in with those Part 2. worthy Patriots that were the most forward to give Taxes; and the rest Page 12. have been as remarkably cheerful in paying them, and filling the Loans when Credit was at the lowest ebb. Those of them that had a share in the Publick Administration, discharg'd their Trust with singular Fidelity, that none of the Mismanagements of the publick Money, which have been so mightily complain'd of, have ever been laid at their door; their Pulse always beat with that of the Publick: No Resentment nor Apprehension of their own particular Danger could ever make them dejected at any publick Advantage, nor easie under a common Calamity. No Cowardice ever made 'em desert the Abdication-Interest under all its Difficulties; nor did any baser Principle ever influence them to betray it, by discouraging its Friend, or giving assistance to its Enemies. The Opposers of the Exclusion of the Duke of York, of the Abdication, of the present Settlement of the Crown, of the Protestant Succession, and the present War; or of Taxes, Associations, and Abjurations, in order to support them: The Betrayers of our Counsels, the Clogs to publick Business, the Traytors to this Government, and the last, the intended Assassins of King William of ever-glorious Memory, and the Men whose common Talk has been all along the Reverse of the publick Interest, were no Dissenters nor Occasional Conformists. Is it not then an unaccountable Proceeding, to treat Men of such a Character as Enemies, whose Principles and Behaviour have always harmoniz'd with the real Interest of their Country? Who have chime'd with all Measures that have led to it; who have sacrific'd their Ease to publick Service, and have run the Risque of their Lives in opposing enslaving Doctrines, which had almost given the finishing Stroak to our Liberties. Their Zeal was equal to the most forward, in recovering a sinking Constitution, and settling it on its true Basis. Their Loyalty to the Queen is without Exception, and they are as unanimous in the Design of Maintaining the Protestant Succession; and yet how strange is it, that a *Dissenter*, with all these Advantages to recommend him, must be us'd as a Malignant, and render'd incapable of being trusted with the meanest part of the publick Administration. If it were no Impeachment of the Wisdom of the Nation, it would look like such an Error in Politicks as can't be reconcil'd to common Prudence. But hence we may see the power and prejudice of Faction, in being govern'd by such narrow Principles as are distinct from the common Good; which opens such an Advantage to our Enemies, as that they will never fail to work these various Engines of Division, for the more easie Accomplishment of our Ruin. Therefore it will not be hard to say, That this *Test-Act* is Supported.

Supported either by mistaken Friends, or by such as are secret Enemies to the Protestant Religion, or an *English* Government.

2. Notwithstanding the Consistency of their Principles and Zeal, with our Common Safety, and the Civil Constitution ; yet this Law (if it is not rack'd beyond the original Intent and Meaning of it) incapacitates all *Dissenters* from giving their Assistance to Maintain the Government in the time of publick *Hazard* and *Danger* ; and that for a meer Scruple of Conscience, about a Matter that the very Imposers themselves think Indifferent, and which cannot be warranted either by the Rule of Religion, or the Practice of Apostolick Times. Where is the Kindness or Love to our Country, to hazard the Safety of the State for such an inconsiderable Trifle ? If Kneeling at the Sacrament is indifferent, why is it not left so ? Why should it be made Necessary to a publick Prejudice and Hazard, to oblige the Humour of a particular *Faction* ? Why should the Government straiten its Security, contrary to all the Rules of *Policy*, for such Reasons as the Interest of it is not concern'd in ; and deprive it self of the Assistance of such a considerable Body of Men as are dispos'd to Serve the Kingdom with more Fidelity and Care than many that are entrusted ? Can we be too firmly united against the formidable Attempts of a potent Adversary, who would subject us to the Slavery of a *French* Government ; and against secret Enemies, who are straining their political Invention to subserve so barbarous a Design ?

There has not been wanting Instances which might have given us a prospect how fatal this piece of Policy might have been : If the late glorious *Revolution* had cost us a Civil War to have effected the happy Consequences we enjoy by it, would it have been any Prejudice to the Nation, or Damage to the Church, to have capacitated *Dissenters* to have fought for the Liberty of their *Country* and the Protestant *Religion* ? Or would the Church have been able to have defended themselves without their Assistance ; if we consider how probable it might have been that those destructive Notions of Liberty, which for a long time had been the Cant of the Church, might have influenc'd many to have took up Arms in the Defence of that arbitrary Prince ? Or if you please you may reflect on a later Instance : If the *Pretender* had Landed in *Scotland*, and had brought the Flames of War into the midst of us, it is very likely such a Necessity might have dispos'd us to have thrown down these Walls of Partition. Is it not then an amazing part of Improvidence to neglect our future Security, since the same Enemy waits for a Power equal to their Inclination to bring us into a Subjection to all their enslaving Designs ?

3 This Law lays no Restraint upon those whose Principles are destructive to the *Constitution*, and have more than once attempted the entire Subversion of it. The *Papists* are not our only Enemies; and if they were, this Law is no Security against them; since the *Pope* is willing enough to give a Dispensation to *English Papists* to comply with all that this Law requires. But there is a sort of Protestants, who have adopted so many Popish Principles, as that that they have been willing to come to Terms of Accommodation; and have so far proceeded as to center in the *Pope* as the *Principium Unitatis*. For this Reason they have affected a Despotick Jurisdiction in the Church, and as independant on the Civil Power as it is in *Spain* or *Italy*: And therefore they have thought the Laws and Liberties of their Country a proper Sacrifice to the Arbitrary Intentions of the preceding Reigns; that so they might obtain the Grant of this Spiritual *Tyranny*, in order to effect the easier what other Designs they had in view. This Project first gave Vent to those enslaving Notions of *Passive Obedience* and *Non-Resistance*, and grafted them into the Articles of the Church: This hatch'd such a Scheme of Politicks as deserves no softer a Title, than the Chains and Shackles of Slavery and Oppression. The Propagation and Spreading of these Principles, have been the Fore-runners of all our Mischief; and yet the Bosom of the Church and State lies open to receive them. It is evident, that Men of this Disposition first blew up the Coals of *Civil Contention*; and those unnatural Wars were occasion'd by the *Ulurations* of the *High-Church*: Who, to maintain the Pomp and Power of their *Hierarchy*, put the Court upon such oppressive Measures as were unsupportable to the best-natur'd People in the World. It is no matter who were the first Aggressors, *King* or *Parliament*; this Conduct laid the Foundation of all those unhappy Commotions; and have since led the Kingdom to the very Brink of Ruin, and would, if it had been possible, have rendred our Deliverance from those heavy Pressures we lay under, abortive; were they not a sort of Church-men that have scrupled the Oaths, or else have salv'd their Conscience with that villainous Distinction of *de Facto & Jure*? Have not this sort of Men opposed the Abdication, and question'd the Legality of the present Settlement? Did they not embaras the Affairs of King *William*, betray our Councils, hinder Supplies, oppose every thing that was for the Security of what we had gain'd by the happy Revolution? Did not this sort of Men bring in the *Occasional Bill* to embroil the Nation with fresh Heats and Animosities? and at last ventured on that *Dangerous Experiment, the Tack*: Which if it had succeeded in the manner suitable to their Wishes, it must have endangered the Liberty of *Europe*, as well as the Protestant Religion at home and abroad. Have they not insulted the *Queen*, who has nothing at Heart so much as Securing the *English Liberties* and Protestant Religion, against all Attempts of private and publick Enemies, for which they take all occasions to fly in the Face of the Government? It is represented in the late Advice given to the *Electors* of the ensuing *Parliament*, ' That some of the *Tories* were actually engag'd in inviting the *Pretender*; and that not one Man of the *Whigs* was so much as suspected of being in the Design of the Invasion. Now had there been a Legal Fence against these dangerous Principles and Practices, it had been a better Service, and a more reasonable Security to our Happy Settlement, than either the Making or Continuing of such Laws as disable those from giving their Assistance, whose Integrity is unquestionable, and whose Love for their Country is so remarkable, that they'd stick at no Expence or Trouble effectually to preserve us from the fatal Consequences, that such intoxicating Notions had almost usher'd in, and still threaten us with an-utter Desolation.

4. It serves to perpetuate our unnatural *Divisions*, and to enlarge the Scene of our *Discontents*, and to stir up endless Feuds and Animosities: On one hand by giving occasion to our Enemies to represent Dissenters as Suspected to the Government, and Enemies to their Country; which, such a Mark of Infamy

and Badge of Servitude, seem probably enough to intimate to the unthinking *Populace*, who are not capable or willing to enquire into such Misrepresentations. And on the other hand, by alienating the Affections of those who are under such an Incapacity ; whereby they suffer in their Legal Rights, contrary to the common Rules of Equity and Justice, for no higher a Reason than a mere Non-compliance with the Usage of the *Church of England*, in receiving of the Holy Sacrament ; which can be no Prejudice to the Safety of the State. The Toleration has put an end to Persecution ; and it were well if that Root of Bitterness was quite destroyed. The Kingdom has received so considerable an Advantage by it, that one would think the Genius of the Nation shou'd be dispos'd to perfect our Happiness. So far the Hopes of our Enemies are defeated, as that the Toleration has put it out of their Power * of playing one Party against the other as they formerly did, to effect the Ruin of both. This has been so visible a Design, that it is high Time utterly to disappoint all Attempts of this Nature, by cementing the closest Union possible : Otherwise we are but reserving the Bones of Contention, and thereby give them Hopes of another Opportunity of playing the same Game over-again with us.

Obj. But still this will be thought necessary to secure the Constitution of the Church, as establish'd by Law.

Ans. 1. If it were so necessary, as is alledged, there might be some Method found out to secure the Church without so much Danger and Hazard to the State.

2. There are several other Fences that are as good Security to the Church as this is ; and which the Dissenters are less likely to get over for any Ecclesiastical Preferment.

3. The High-flying Principles more endanger the Church, by introducing such *Innovations* in *Doctrine* and *Worship*, as are inconsistent with the *Homilies* and *Articles* of it, then a Dissent from the Ceremonies of the Church ; which are the far less substantial Parts of Religion, than the Doctrines of the Church which they firmly adhere to : Therefore it is not an entire Security of the Constitution that they are so much concern'd about.

4. Occasional *Conformity* has brought many of the Dissenters into Places in the Government, and yet there has not been the least Violence offered to the security of the Church.

5. This does not hinder Dissenters from being chose Members of *Parliament* ; and the Danger is, if there be any, that if a number of them should get into the *Legislature*, they might attempt the Subversion of the Church ; which can't be probable, there being so few of the Gentry as will own that Character.

6. If the Dissenters were such Enemies to the Church, they had an opportunity of venting their Prejudice against it, in the Reign of King *James*.

7. The Church then promis'd to come to a Temper when they were in so much Danger in King *James's* Reign, and to exercise a tender Regard to their Dissenting *Brethren*, who have carried it all along with that Diference to the Church, as they have had no occasion to alter their Sentiments.

Thus far this Law has been consider'd, as it does more immediately affect *England* ; which, if it does not afford us Reason enough for the Repeal of it, yet certainly the Prejudice it offers to the late Union with *Scotland*, should give some farther Weight to it. The Union did not pass with so universal an Approbation of the People of this Kingdom, as to render all further Methods for the strengthening of it, unnecessary. However advantageous the Union may be in it self, which certainly might produce all the Happiness that a Kingdom may be capable of, as Unity, Strength, encrease of Riches, as well as an impregnable Security to the Civil Liberty, and to the establish'd Religion of the Country, if the Terms were so exactly calculated to the Interest of both Kingdoms, as might give satisfaction on all hands. In order to effect such a Cement as this, it would be necessary to remove all those Inconveniences as tend to disunite

unite Affection, or would be any Bar to the equal Distribution of those Advantages, which the Scots may justly lay a Claim to, as a proper Recompence for the Loss of their Parliament, and those Priviledges they enjoy'd under their Independent Government. They think they can't be too secure from the Power of a Faction that has persecuted them with a merciless Violence, and it is notorious their Designs are still restless: So that it would be a considerable Inducement to persuade us, the English aim at all the Good they can do us, when they exert their utmost Endeavours to prevent our Fears, and remove every thing that might create any Dissatisfaction. Otherwise it is natural enough to think the Articles of Union are not heartily intended for the Security of our Ecclesiastical Constitution, especially while such a Law continues in Force, as can't be justified either from the Rules of Religion or common Equity: And, as our present Circumstances are, can't serve any other Ends, than to enflame Differences, heighten Animosities, and to frighten us with an Apprehension of over turning Presbyterian Government. But to represent Things more clearly.

1. The Presbyterians in Scotland have suffered so much under Episcopal Jurisdiction, as sufficiently inspires us with a Dread of the Re-assumption of that Tyrannick Church Power. Our Acts of Parliament, and the Account we can give of the inhumane Execution of them, are such standing Proofs of this, as must for ever render the Principles of our Prelacy abhorred by Men of common Humanity. Therefore no wonder, when the Convention met, they declared the Bishops to be a great and unsupportable Grievance to the Nation. The Reason of which was justified from those Sanguinary Laws they had the greatest Influence in passing; whereby the Generality of the Kingdom were oblig'd, against their Genius and Conscience, to comply with Episcopal Tyranny. The History of which, with the Abstracts of the Acts of Parliament, pass'd against the Presbyterians, is given us by an ingenious and intelligent Author *. They obliged all those in Publick Trust or Office to renounce or abjure the Covenant, on pain of losing their Places, and Priveledge of Trading. It was enacted, That all Non Conformists, who presume to exercise their Ministry, be punish'd as seditious Persons: And that all Persons, in acknowledgment of His Majesty's Government, Ecclesiastical and Civil, attend the Sermons of the Episcopal Ministers; Noblemen and Gentlemen, refusing, to lose a fourth Part of their Rents; Burgesses their Freedom, and a fourth Part of their Moveables; Yeomen the fourth Part of their Moveables; and others 20 Shillings a Time; with Liberty to the Council to inflict farther Punishment. Preaching at a House, or Field-Meetings, was punished by Death and Confiscation; and Hearing at Field-Meetings the like. This is a Sample of their Mercy. These bloody Principles and Tenets have so near an Affiance to those of Rome, that it would exercise an uncommon Invention to find out the difference; and yet these worried the Church of Scotland for almost a whole Century. We have but little Reason to be thankful for the Marriage of Prince's Margaret to James IV. by Virtue of which we lost the Residence of our Prince amongst us, and unhappily brought our selves into a Dependance upon England, and under the Conduct and Influence of English Councils; which, not to mention other Things, has been introductory of all those Evils our Church has undergone. The Clergy of England, to gain their own Ends, instil'd into King James our sixth, and their First, those Notions of Arbitrary Power, industriously to secure him to their Interest, and to render him Implacable to the Ecclesiastical Constitution of his Native Country, which was more suited to maintain our Legal Liberty and Freedom. This gave the Rise to the first Attempts of establishing Bishops amongst us, who always went along with the Court to exalt the Prerogative in Parliament, and to enslave their Country: Having but little Interest in the Affections of the People, they could hit upon no other Measures to secure themselves, than by raising the Foundation of their Greatness on the ruined Liberty of their Country. This was it that twisted Arbitrary and Episcopal Power into

so close a Conjunction, and prompted them to the forming of those Laws, and the Bloody Execution of them, as might effectually bear down all Opposition to their several Interests. These were our Sufferings and the Reasons of them ; and can any blame our Jealousies and Fears, who suppose us to be act'd by the same Principles of Preservation with the rest of Mankind. Though their Power is under an Eclipse ; yet they could nor, nor can't recede from their old Principles, nor be oblig'd to pay due Homage to Providence that had so miraculously sav'd us. * Therefore they address'd King James, expressing all the Regard, that Words could do, to his Arbitrary Proceedings just before his Abdication. They were Enemies to the Revolution, pray openly for the Pretender, refus'd the Oaths to King William, and Queen *ANN.* So that ours is the common Safety ; and what's a Security to us, is to the Whole ; and it is impossible there can be too strong a Guard against the Approach of such Enemies, whose Principles are so dangerous and destructive : Which Consideration should influence us to lay aside ungrounded Prejudices, or any thing that might occasion Distrust, or prevent the Cementing of such a Union as might be a common Bulwark to our Blessings.

* History
of Eng.
Vol. 3.
pag. 319.

2. It is not altogether without Reason, that we suspect the event of this Union may prove the Reestablishment of *Episcopal Jurisdiction*, which has been so bloody to us. 'Tis true, the Moderation and Justice, of the Government of *Queen Ann*, is a present ease to our fears, though this cannot be a perpetual Security.

Besides, our present Circumstances are some sort of a Defence ; for it might be of dangerous Consequence, and too open a design of serving the Enemy to attempt any Alteration of this Nature, while we are engag'd in a War against so Potent an Enemy. But the Demise of the Queen will weaken our hopes of the continuance of our Ecclesiastical Establishment, it being certain we shall lye more exposed to the Violence of a Faction, whose Enmity is implacable, and are irreconcilably set against a Constitution so opposite to their Power and Grandeur. Laws are changeable, and derive their Justice and Equity from the Principles of those that are uppermost in the Administration : What is call'd Rebellion now, in another Reign may be call'd Loyalty ; and if ever Arbitrary Principles come into Fashion again, certainly Rebellion, Sedition, and other Artifices will be thought just and reasonable to misrepresent and ruin an Establishment that is so admirably fram'd to support our Legal Liberties, and to oppose the designs of Despotick Power. It would be well therefore, while the Nation was in a Disposition, and warm'd with a Resentment of these dangerous Notions, to enter upon such Measures as might, if possible, so far weaken the Hopes of our Enemies, as to frustrate the very Thoughts of any further attempt upon us. But this cannot be conceiv'd while there is any occasion of Distrust or Reason, to weaken a mutual confidence, remaining : This must breed Distrust, keep up Animosities, give a Handle and Hopes to our Enemies, especially while such a Law as the *Test Act* continues. The very Demur argues Suspicion : On the contrary, if the repeal of this Law could be obtain'd. 1. It would bring a further Assurance to the Friends of the Union, satisfaction to the doubting, and shame to the Prejudices of malignant Opposers, to see such an Engine of Division quite remov'd. Otherwise how can it be, but the Scots must imagine themselves suspected, while rendered incapable of any part of the Publick Administration beyond the Articles of the Union : Besides, it will raise an Imagination of the worst of Events, of a design tending to the Subversion of our Ecclesiastical Constitution, when there is so great a stiffness to part with their Interest in that Power that may occasion it, or at least in adjusting it so, as might serve the common Good and Welfare of all of us. 2. The *Church of England* cannot so much as pretend they shall weaken their Security by the Repeal of it. They have so much the odds of us in this, that to effect

their

their subversion would be morally impossible. Their Bishops alone have above, a third as much in the *Legislature*, as our *Lords and Commons* together: Their Numbers are above four to one in Parliament for the Church. Besides the Prince, according to several Regulations in the *Act of Settlement*, is oblig'd to be a Member of the *Church of England*: That so it would be a wild Imagination to entertain Apprehensions of Danger when the whole Sovereign Power is extended for its Protection. 3. Though the *QUEEN* has so accommodated her Government, to the satisfaction of all her Subjects, as that it would be an unwarrantable Jealousy to suspect she would aim at any thing besides their real Good, or that she would make any Alteration in our Church Government, which she has so frequently promis'd to maintain. Yet certainly there are a sort of Men, if they can undermine themselves into Power, will not fail to misrepresent us, or stick at the Breach of any Article to break down all our Securities. Can we think otherwise of those Churchmen, who abetted the Invasion of the *Pretender*, and secretly rejoice at any Prospect of his Mounting the Throne, Triumph at the Success of the *French*, stick not at giving vile misrepresentations of the *Kirk of Scotland*, that would in *England* have trampled down our Brethren the *Dissenters*, by passing Occasional Bills? These are avow'd Enemies to their Country; Yet such there are, that, to obtain their own extravagant Purposes, would rejoice in our common Confusion: Therefore it would be necessary to make all the advances possible to strengthen the Union in such a manner, as may be out of their Power ever to give it any Disturbance. 4. Besides, our Fears receive no inconsiderable strength from the Breach of some of the *Articles of Union*, since it commenc'd; which if it is not a Proof of the same design upon all of them, it is an ill President to those that have: And I believe any that understand our Circumstances, since it took place, will not wonder if we complain of such a sort of usage as will rather heighten our Aversion, without a more equitable Proceeding, then reconcile our Judgment or Affection to it.

3. It may reasonably be expected that the *Scots* should have as equal a Right to all the Civil Privileges of *England*, without any imposition upon their Conscience, as the *English* already have to all the Privileges of *Scotland*. What can be fairly objected? Is there not as much danger to the *Kirk of Scotland*, by admitting a Member of the *Church of England* into any Civil Post, beyond the River *Tweed*, as there can be to the *Church of England* by admitting a *Scotch Presbyterian* into any Civil Trust on this side it? Or would the Government of each Part of *Great Britain* be the more weakened, by giving an equal Capacity to all the *QUEENS* Subjects to Act for her Service, when Necessity shall require? Otherwise it appears as a design to raise the Power of *England*, and to enlarge the Interest of it to our Disadvantage, by denying us the Privilege, which Reason and Justice give us an equal Right to. As things stand upon this bottom, *England* is likely to receive the greatest Benefit by this Union; having it not only in its Power to debar us of the Privileges their own Members are entitled to, without such Compliances as are contrary to the Genius of our Country, but also to confer all the Places of Profit in *Scotland* upon themselves.

4. It is our Policy and Interest, beyond dispute, to remove such Causes of Division as may hazard the State, our Religion and Liberty, the Protestant Cause and Succession, and all the Advantages we may expect by the Union; by keeping an uneasiness upon Peoples Minds, alienating our Affections, or creating a mutual Distrust, and Rooting the Seeds of perpetual Animosities; especially at a time when we have an Enemy within and without us, united in their Intentions to work our Confusion. Those that are within us are carrying on an Interest separate from that of the Kingdom's; and have a Dependance on a such a Foreign Power as is forward enough to give any Assistance to put their fatal Projects

Projects in Execution: The Episcopal Clergy in *Scotland* are generally in the Interest of the *Pretender*, disown our present Settlement, and would be glad to sacrifice both Religion and Liberty to a *French Power*; and there are multitudes in *England* have adopted the same Principles, as has been evident by a continued opposition to every thing that might subserve the true Interest of the Nation. Though they have found out a method to salve their Consciences in a pretended Compliance with the present Government, yet they are more sincerely engag'd in a design that would quite over-turn it. These are the Men who entertain those Principles that have distemper'd the State, thrown us into frequent Convulsions; and it is demonstrable by several remarkable Events, how dangerous they are to our Liberties and Pernicious to the Protestant Cause, by the Efforts they have made for a Reconciliation with the Church of *Rome*: Which upon Reasons founded on the perfect Rule of Faith, and according to the Opinion of the first Reformers, is impossible. Do not these Considerations require a stricter Union than hitherto we have arrived to? How strange it is that nothing but a visible Danger will convince Men of their Mistakes! Is it worth while to run the Risque of our Peace, and all that we can call valuable, by imposing such Things on one hand as are thought indifferent, and consequently cannot be thought of such an importance as to be laid in the Balance with our common Good and Safety? What Spring did these Divisions rise out of? Are they not the effect of Popish Counsels? And it is certainly acting pursuant to Jesuitical Maxims, to promote them. It is notorious enough how far they have been concern'd in all our Civil Differences, and what Arts they have used to widen them, that so they might insinuate themselves through our Breaches into the Supreme Government, in order for the Reestablishment of Popery; so that maintaining any Principles of Division, promoting the Causes of it, is a real acting for their Interest and Serving their Designs to our own Destruction. How happy would it be if there could be a method fix'd upon, as would effectually prevent any consequence of this Nature: A removal of the Causes of Discontent, and mutual Condescension would be a great Step towards it. There is no Party can pretend to Infallibility so much, as to suppose they are certainly in the Right. First Impressions are the strongest Arguments for most Opinions; and if this is the Rule we are to steer by, we are all in the Right. If Mankind had a greater sense of their own Weakness, it would give an Alay to their Prejudices against any Party, and would so moderate their Temper, that it would render them at least somewhat capable of a Reconciliation.

I shall wind up my Thoughts in a Word or two for *Ireland*; which, as it has severely felt the miserable Effects of *Popish Tyranny* in a more remarkable manner, so there ought to have been a greater and more tender Regard to their Sufferings and future Security, than to have introduc'd such an Engine of Division as must expose them more openly, the next opportunity, to the Barbarous attempts of the *Irish*. The *Protestants* in *Ireland* were before firmly united in their Civil Interest, and in that respect there was no other Distinction but *Protestant* and *Papist*. The Weight of their Sufferings produc'd such an Unanimity, as that there was an Universal Agreement in a grateful Sense of their Deliverance, and of the Government of King *William*; insomuch, that the *Irish Gentlemen*, when they came over to *England*, were surpriz'd to hear Protestants rail against their Protestant Deliverer.

What Policy or Service or Safety is it to the Government of that Kingdom, and to the Protestant Interest, to weaken their Strength by dividing them, and rendering so great a Body of them uncapable of giving their Assistance, which has been so remarkably serviceable to the Church of *Ireland*? Who was it that preserv'd *London-derry*? was it not Protestant Dissenters? Were not the *Inn-killing Men* so fam'd for their Valour, *Presbyterians*? And must the Dissenters

in London-derry, that made so Obstinate a Defence against King James, and the Presbyterian *Iniskilling Men*, who were so remarkable for their Success, and the many defeats they gave the *Irish*, be equal Sufferers in their Civil Rights, with the common Enemy of the Protestant Cause, which they had so bravely oppos'd ? As if an *Irish Papist* and a Protestant Dissenter were equal Enemies to the Civil Government and Protestant Religion. How this came to pass, a great Peer, then in Post, can give an easy Resolution. Whether it was from a design to serve the Papists, who had exerted their utmost endeavours to have sunk the Bill, while it was under the *Parliaments* consideration ; or else to gratify them by dividing Protestants amongst themselves, who were so unanimous against them ; or out of a biggoted Prejudice to Dissenters : Whether any one of these, or all of them, were the Reason, is uncertain ; yet the Dissenters in *Parliament*, rather than lose the *Bill*, which might be so serviceable to the Protestant Cause, were willing to become a Sacrifice to *English Bigotry* ; Though this was contrary to the very Genius of Episcopal Protestants, who were well appriz'd of the eminent Services of the Dissenters in their bloody Commotions, which I have been assured of from some Gentlemen who were Members of that Parliament, as well as from several *Addresses*, that last came from *Ireland*. And indeed, the late Attempt of the *Pretender* upon *Scotland* convinc'd them, that the strongest Union amongst Protestants is, their best Security : For indeed, were there any Refuge for Protestant Dissenters, the *Church of Ireland* could not take it ill if they quitted her Defence, since they had been so unkindly and ungratefully used.

I shall conclude with this general Remark. It is easy to observe, though we have been a People almost hurried on to Ruin by our intestine Distractions ; yet the remarkable Conduct of the *Queen*, in tempering her Government with so much *Moderation*, has been like a Charm to all our Heats and Animosities ; and how happy would it be if the Influence of so bright an Example should spread an entire Conquest over them ! It is such a President to succeeding Princes, as will be a standing Copy to instruct them in the Art of Government. These Times of Moderation have so far opened the Eyes of the People, that they are better able to form a Judgment wherein their true Interest lies. They have had a distinct View of the different Effects of the Principles of absolute Jurisdiction, and of those which are suited to maintain the Constitution with all its Advantages. The first would have subjected our Property to the arbitrary and uncertain pleasure of the Prince, and have over-turn'd our Laws, by which it is secured. The latter limits the Exercise of Monarchy, as the Constitution directs ; whereby all the just Rights of the People are preserv'd. This happy Constitution of Government was almost subverted by an extravagant Prerogative, which bid such a Defiance to the Fundamental *Laws* and *Statutes* of the Land, as was evident they were no Security to the Lives and Liberties of the Subject : So that there was no Possibility of escaping this Deluge of Arbitrary Power, and settling the Constitution on its proper *Basis*, but by reducing the Supreme Power within the Boundaries of the Laws. This was happily accomplish'd by the late glorious Revolution, which was brought about by such Principles as the *Church of Scotland*, and Dissenters in *England* have always maintain'd. It was these Principles which laid the Foundation of our present Settlement, seated King *William* on the *Throne*, paved the Way for his glorious Successor, our Sovereign Queen *ANN*, establish'd the *Protestant Succession*, and cut off all the Claims of a Popish Pretender. Who then can be truer Friends to Her Majesty, than such as have maintain'd those Principles on which the present Settlement is founded ? The Episcopal Clergy in *Scotland* refuse all Submission to it, and so openly declare themselves in the Interest of the Pretender, as would provoke Her Majesty's severest Resentments. was not her Government tempered with uncommon Mildness. This is too prevailing a Sentiment in *England* ; and, however reconcil'd they

they may seem to Her Majesty's Government, yet it is to be fear'd that those who so vigorously appear'd against the Act of Settlement, have hardly renounc'd those Principles, as may, when occasion serves, prove destructive to our Liberties. Therefore, how odly soever the Presbyterians may be represented, they are Her Majesties sincere Friends, both in *Scotland* and *England*; that so it is apparent the present Incapacity they labour under, is a real Differerice to Her Majesty, and a weakening the Foundation of the Protestant Succession: Besides, it makes room for Men of arbitrary and narrow Principles to work their own Advantages by our Divisions, who want neither Art nor Industry to carry on their fatal Designs against us. There would be the less Reason to fear, were all the Members of the Church of *England* as united in their Civil Interest as the Presbyterians in *England* and *Scotland* are. But it is notorious they are not: Some of them still hold the Doctrine of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance, as taught in the late Reigns; others are for reconciling that Doctrine with the Principles of the Revolution; others are against those unreasonable Maxims, as prejudicial to Her Majesty's Interest, and the Saferty of the Kingdom. To act upon Revolution Principles is certainly the only conducive Means for the Security of our present Happiness. This is confirm'd by Her Majesty's own Opinion, in her Answer to the Address of the House of Lords: Which is thus. *I must always place my chief Dependance upon those who have given such repeated Proofs of the greatest Warmth and Concern for the Support of the Revolution, Security of my Person, and of the Protestant Succession.* A great number of the Church of *England* are of quite different Sentiments, and have acted so strictly pursuant to their old Principles, as has given a considerable Check to the Succes of our Councils, and all along has been a Clog to our Affairs, and a cause of all the Mismanagements in the Administration. Who is it then can be rely'd on? A Churchman, who has took the Test, and yet a secret Enemy to the State; or a Presbyterian, who cannot bring his Conscience to every Ceremonial Compliancy, but yet an inseparable Friend to the Queen and Government. A Churchman, as is evident, do's not always harmonize with the present Interest of the Nation; but the Presbyterians do, without exception. Therefore, while the Government is confis'd to this Party, it stands on a broken Foundation, which can't be more effectually supported, than by changing this Religious Test into a Civil one; whereby the Kingdom would be secured against all the hidden Artifices of its Enemies, and let into its Assistance those who are known to be Cordial Friends. Without this the *Scots* may truly suppose their Condition to be defenceless, and lye too exposed to the Invasion of Prelatical Power; and that they are to expect no better Treatment than *English* Disleaters, who are so industriously kept out of Places of Trust, that the *Occasional Bill* seems to be as effectually execut'd as if it had really pass'd: And how this will comport with the Preservation of the Union, it is easy to imagine.

I shall exercise your Patience no further, only be assured I am fully perswaded, that what I have here offered is for the Honour of God and the Interest of my Country: So I conclude, begging you to make an Allowance for all the Imperfections you find, and to believe the hearty Sincerity of,

S I R,

*Edinburgb,
Octob. 20th.
1708.*

Your Humble Servant,

C. H.

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